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In the Claims

1-29.   (Canceled)

30.   (New) A method, comprising the steps of:

employing a procedure scope that defines a plurality of local variables and a context for execution of statements, wherein the procedure scope lacks a local definition of a timeout variable; and

executing an Expect statement that traverses a procedure hierarchy to find a most recently set value for the timeout variable.

31.   (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the step of employing the procedure scope comprises the step of:

determining that a value of the timeout variable associated with the Expect statement is undefined within the procedure scope.

32.   (New) The method of claim 31, wherein the step of executing the Expect statement comprises the step of:

traversing backward through a set of one or more nested procedures in a procedure hierarchy to identify the most recently set value for the timeout variable.

33.   (New) The method of claim 30, further comprising the step of:

assigning the most recently set value to the timeout variable on a global scope.

34.   (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the step of employing the procedure scope comprises the step of:

establishing the procedure scope based on a set of one or more nested procedures that are invoked to reach the procedure scope.

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35. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the step of employing the procedure scope comprises the steps of:

on a first occasion determining that a value of the timeout variable associated with the Expect statement is undefined within the procedure scope; and

upon the first occasion identifying a calling procedure to the procedure scope from a procedure hierarchy by traversing backwards through the procedure hierarchy to identify the most recently set value for the timeout variable;

the method further comprising the steps of:

on a second occasion determining that a value of a timeout variable associated with a second Expect statement is defined within a local procedure scope.

36. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the step of executing the Expect statement comprises the step of:

employing a change scope command to traverse backwards from the procedure scope to a calling procedure and to change the procedure scope to a second scope associated with the calling procedure.

37. (New) The method of claim 36, wherein the step of executing the Expect statement comprises the step of:

returning a value of the timeout variable defined at a global scope associated with the procedure scope.

38. (New) The method of claim 36, wherein the step of executing the Expect statement comprises the steps of:

determining that a global timeout value is undefined; and

returning a default timeout value.

39. (New) An apparatus, comprising:

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that employs a procedure scope that defines a plurality of local variables and a context for execution of statements, wherein the procedure scope lacks a local definition of a timeout variable; and

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that executes an Expect statement that traverses a procedure hierarchy to find a most recently set value for the timeout variable.

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40.   (New) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein the material recorded on a computer-readable medium that employs the procedure scope comprises:

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that determines that a value of the timeout variable associated with the Expect statement is undefined within the procedure scope.

41.   (New) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein the material recorded on a computer-readable medium that executes the Expect statement comprises:

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that traverses backward through a set of one or more nested procedures in a procedure hierarchy to identify the most recently set value for the timeout variable.

42.   (New) The apparatus of claim 39, further comprising:

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that assigns the most recently set value to the timeout variable on a global scope.

43.   (New) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein the material recorded on a computer-readable medium that employs the procedure scope comprises:

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that establishes the procedure scope based on a set of one or more nested procedures that are invoked to reach the procedure scope.

44.   (New) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein the material recorded on a computer-readable medium that employs the procedure scope comprises:

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that on a first occasion determines that a value of the timeout variable associated with the Expect statement is undefined within the procedure scope; and

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that upon the first occasion identifies a calling procedure to the procedure scope from a procedure hierarchy by traversing backwards through the procedure hierarchy to identify the most recently set value for the timeout variable;

the apparatus further comprising:

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that on a second occasion determines that a value of a timeout variable associated with a second Expect statement is defined within a local procedure scope.

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45.   (New) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein the material recorded on a computer-readable medium that executes the Expect statement comprises:

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that employs a change scope command to traverse backwards from the procedure scope to a calling procedure and to change the procedure scope to a second scope associated with the calling procedure.

46.   (New) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the material recorded on a computer-readable medium that executes the Expect statement comprises:

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that returns a value of the timeout variable defined at a global scope associated with the procedure scope.

47.   (New) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the material recorded on a computer-readable medium that executes the Expect statement comprises:

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that determines that a global timeout value is undefined; and

material recorded on a computer-readable medium that returns a default timeout value.

48.   (New) An article, comprising:

one or more computer-readable signal-bearing tangible media;

means in the one or more media for employing a procedure scope that defines a plurality of local variables and a context for execution of statements, wherein the procedure scope lacks a local definition of a timeout variable; and

means in the one or more media for executing an Expect statement that traverses a procedure hierarchy to find a most recently set value for the timeout variable.

49.   (New) The article of claim 48, wherein the means in the one or more media for employing the procedure comprises:

means in the one or more media for determining that a value of the timeout variable associated with the Expect statement is undefined within the procedure scope.

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50.   (New) The article of claim 49, wherein the means in the one or more media for executing the Expect statement comprises:

means in the one or more media for traversing backward through a set of one or more nested procedures in a procedure hierarchy to identify the most recently set value for the timeout variable.

51.   (New) The article of claim 48, further comprising:

means in the one or more media for assigning the most recently set value to the timeout variable on a global scope.

52.   (New) The article of claim 48, wherein the means in the one or more media for employing the procedure scope comprises:

means in the one or more media for establishing the procedure scope based on a set of one or more nested procedures that are invoked to reach the procedure scope.

53.   (New) The article of claim 48, wherein the means in the one or more media for employing the procedure scope comprises:

means in the one or more media for on a first occasion determining that a value of the timeout variable associated with the Expect statement is undefined within the procedure scope; and

means in the one or more media for upon the first occasion identifying a calling procedure to the procedure scope from a procedure hierarchy by traversing backwards through the procedure hierarchy to identify the most recently set value for the timeout variable;

the article further comprising:

means in the one or more media for on a second occasion determining that a value of a timeout variable associated with a second Expect statement is defined within a local procedure scope.

54.   (New) The article of claim 48, wherein the means in the one or more media for executing the Expect statement comprises:

means in the one or more media for employing a change scope command to traverse backwards from the procedure scope to a calling procedure and to change the procedure scope to a second scope associated with the calling procedure.

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55.   (New) The article of claim 54, wherein the means in the one or more media for executing the Expect statement comprises:

means in the one or more media for returning a value of the timeout variable defined at a global scope associated with the procedure scope.

56.   (New) The article of claim 54, wherein the means in the one or more media for executing the Expect statement comprises:

means in the one or more media for determining that a global timeout value is undefined; and

means in the one or more media for returning a default timeout value.